

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a telecommunication system configured to provide a connection between a caller and a callee via a telephone network, wherein the telephone network is configured to connect the caller and the callee, a method for allowing the callee to prevent the caller from establishing the connection with the callee, the method comprising:

receiving an instruction from the callee to prevent the caller from establishing the connection with the callee;

identifying a first telephone number associated with the caller; and

preventing one or more phone calls from the first telephone number from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

2. The method as in claim 1, wherein receiving an instruction from the callee includes:

detecting an off-hook signal from callee; and

receiving a predetermined code from the callee.

3. The method as in claim 2, wherein the predetermined code includes at least one of the following:

one or more digits; and

one or more non-numeric symbols.

4. The method as in claim 1, wherein identifying the first telephone number includes: maintaining a record of the most recent telephone number that was a source of a call placed to the second telephone number immediately prior to receiving the callee's instruction to prevent the caller from establishing the connection with the callee; and

consulting the record to identify the most recent telephone number as the first telephone number.

5. The method as in claim 2, wherein receiving the predetermined code includes:
receiving a first portion of the predetermined code;
prompting the callee to send a second portion of the predetermined code; and
receiving the second portion of the predetermined code.

6. The method as in claim 1, further comprising:
providing a database to allow the callee to enter the first telephone number therein,
wherein the database includes one or more telephone numbers to be blocked.

7. The method as in claim 5, further comprising prompting the callee to perform
administration tasks.

8. The method as in claim 7, wherein prompting the callee includes prompting the
callee to record a message to be played to the caller.

9. The method as in claim 7, wherein prompting the callee includes prompting the
callee to select a pre-recorded message to be played to the caller.

10. The method as in claim 1, further comprising one of charging a subscription fee to
the callee and charging a per-usage fee to the callee.

11. A telecommunications apparatus, comprising:
means for receiving an instruction from a callee to prevent a caller from establishing a
connection with the callee;
means for identifying a first telephone number associated with the caller; and
means for preventing one or more phone calls from the first telephone number from
being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

12. The apparatus as in claim 11, wherein the means for receiving includes:

means for detecting an off-hook signal from callee; and
means for receiving a predetermined code from the callee.

13. A telecommunications system, comprising:

a telecommunications switch in communication with a first telecommunications device associated with a callee and a second telecommunications device associated with a caller; and

a controller in communication with the switch, the controller having stored thereon instructions and data which, when executed, cause the telecommunications system to:

recognize an instruction from the callee to prevent the caller from establishing a connection with the callee;

identify a first telephone number associated with the caller; and

prevent one or more phone calls from the first telephone number from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein recognizing an instruction from the callee includes:

detecting an off-hook signal from callee; and

receiving a predetermined code from the callee.

15. The system of claim 13, further comprising a database in communication with the controller.

16. The system of claim 13, further comprising an interactive voice response system in communication with the controller and the switch.

17. The system of claim 13, further comprising a service creation computer in communication with the controller.

18. The system of claim 13, wherein the switch is in communication with at least one of the first telecommunications device and the second telecommunications device via at least one of a public switched telephone network and an integrated services digital network.

19. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon data and instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

receive an instruction from a callee to prevent a caller from establishing a connection with the callee;

identify a first telephone number associated with the caller; and

prevent one or more phone calls from the first telephone number from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

20. The medium of claim 19, having stored thereon additional data and instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to receive an instructions from the callee by:

detecting an off-hook signal from callee; and

receiving a predetermined code from the callee.